

Dear FCC,

Regarding the Status of Competition in the Market for the Delivery of Video Programming:

I live in an area that probably has more options than most, since Lexington now has 2 choices of cable systems. We also have 2 DBS options, but due to zoning restrictions the HSD option is not viable at my location (It would require roof mounting the dish.)

But with all this, there appears to be little or no competition. All services seem to fall in line price-wise like they were price fixing. I expect this is not really true, and the pricing is really controlled by the Hollywood movie cartel on the other end and not the media conduit companies. But virtually all services are way too costly for me and I make a good living as an engineer, except for the free OTA television stations (which I always got via antenna and never by cable or satellite, even when I was a subscriber).

Until this past year I was a subscriber to a lower cost tier of programming from Direct TV. Over time, my selected services were removed and replaced by more and more costly ones until finally I had to scrap the service.

I have been planning to switch to Dish Network, where I understand for a \$5 per month surcharge I would still be allowed to subscribe "a la carte" to Showtime and HBO channels. But I have been holding off wondering if this option will continue, with all the talk of mergers.

The cable options look as bad as the current Direct TV situation: I would be forced to buy several channels I have no desire to watch to get each one that I would like.

I hope you will take steps to increase competition, and force prices downward. One obvious helpful step is to outlaw this bundling of services and allow customers to buy exactly the channels they desire and leave out the rest.

This I understand has always been possible with HST services, or at least more so. When I go into a drugstore to buy aspirin I don't think it would be very legal for the store to include in the cost a bottle of codeine cough syrup too that I did not ask for, but that is the situation today in subscription video services.